



CITY OF AKRON, OHIO
POLICE DIVISION
JAMES D. NICE, CHIEF OF POLICE

NUMBER P-2011-047	EFFECTIVE DATE October 31, 2011	RESCINDS P-2008-047 Issued 7-7-08
SUBJECT Missing Person Procedure		ISSUING AUTHORITY Chief James D. Nice

I. POLICY

All missing person cases are viewed as potential crimes and require prompt and thorough investigation. The scope and duration of the search and any investigation will be based upon the level of risk to the person if not located.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. High risk missing person – A person under the age of thirteen, a mentally incompetent person, or a person missing under unusual or suspected criminal circumstances.
- B. AMBER Alert – A cooperative effort between law enforcement, the media, and the public to quickly disseminate information about an abducted child. The AMBER Alert uses the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to broadcast information regarding the abducted child and the suspect over the radio, television, and highway signs.
- C. A Child is Missing Program – A free service offered to law enforcement agencies to assist in the recovery of missing persons. This program differs from the AMBER Alert in that information suggesting abduction is not necessary, and the plan may be used for adults. A taped message is made by telephone asking residents in the designated area to be on the lookout for the missing person and to call the Akron Police Department with any information.

III. PROCEDURE

A. OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1. Conduct a thorough preliminary investigation, including:
 - a. Search the residence thoroughly, even if the family insists the child is not there.
 - b. Attempt to obtain a recent photo of the missing person.
 - c. Conduct a neighborhood canvass and document any information in an AOIBRS Report or an action taken.

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- d. Interview witnesses, including the last person who saw the missing person.
2. Notify immediate supervisor on all missing person cases.
3. Complete a Missing Person Report and any other applicable reports. There is **no waiting period** for reporting a missing person.
4. Notify Safety Communications in all cases, including adults, prior to clearing the call.
5. In cases where the missing person is under eighteen years of age or is under the age of twenty-one but is mentally or physically handicapped, it is important to obtain the names of their dentist and doctor and include it on the report.
6. All numbered reports are to be turned in by the end of the officer's tour of duty, even if the missing person returned.
7. Upon verification that a missing person has been located, officers shall immediately report that information to Safety Communications along with the Missing Persons Unit, if during normal working hours.
8. High risk missing person
 - a. Contact the Detective Bureau Desk. The Detective Bureau Desk will contact the JAM Unit to determine whether or not to have a detective respond or call in.
 - b. Continue the search for the high risk missing person until:
 - 1) Relieved by the Detective Bureau, or
 - 2) Relieved by the next on duty shift, or
 - 3) Relieved by a supervisor.
 - c. Officers will document all action taken and forward it to the oncoming shift.

B. SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Respond to all high risk missing person calls.
2. Determine what immediate further action is necessary; i.e., search, notifications, BOLO's, MDT messages, AMBER Alert, A Child Is Missing, etc.
3. Ensure all notifications have been made.

C. DETECTIVE BUREAU RESPONSIBILITIES

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1. Conduct follow-up investigations on all active missing persons.
2. Assist field units as necessary.
3. Respond to high risk missing persons when requested by a supervisor.

D. SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Obtain as much information as possible in relation to the call; i.e., age, mental awareness, possible cause of absence, etc.
2. Notify the responding officer's immediate supervisor at the time of dispatch when it is known that the missing person is high risk.
3. Enter the missing person in LEADS/NCIC files immediately upon notification by a reporting officer or supervisor.
4. A located missing person will not be removed from the computer files until verified.
5. Notify the reporting party or guardian of the located missing person. If unable to contact the reporting party or guardian, then notify the Missing Persons Unit so that proper notification can be made at a later time.

E. THE FOLLOWING ARE AUTHORIZED TO VALIDATE THAT A MISSING PERSON HAS BEEN LOCATED

1. Police officers from any agency
2. Children Services Board
3. School officials
4. Juvenile Court
5. Original reporting party
6. Legal guardian

F. AMBER ALERT

1. Qualifications to issue an AMBER Alert. All four criteria must be met.
 - a. The child is under eighteen years of age and has been missing less than twenty-four hours; and

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- b. There is credible information that suggests that the child was forcibly or intentionally removed or lured away from his location and remains missing; and
 - c. The law enforcement agency believes the child is in danger of serious bodily harm or death; and
 - d. There is enough descriptive information about the child, the alleged abductor, or alleged abductor's vehicle to believe an immediate broadcast alert will help.
- 2. Officer's responsibilities
 - a. Respond to the scene and determine if all AMBER Alert criteria are met.
 - b. Contact immediate supervisor.
- 3. Supervisor's responsibilities
 - a. Verify criteria and contact shift commander.
 - b. Coordinate on scene investigation.
 - c. Contact the Safety Communications supervisor and relay all information needed to issue the AMBER Alert.
 - d. If needed, establish a command post.
- 4. Shift commander's responsibilities
 - a. Authorize the issuance of the AMBER Alert. Only shift commanders or Juvenile Bureau supervisors are authorized to issue the AMBER Alert.
 - b. Determine the scope of the alert.
 - 1) Northern Ohio – Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Erie, Geauga, Huron, Lake, Lorain, Medina, and Summit counties
 - 2) Statewide or multiple regional alert based on EAS regions.
 - c. Factors in determining the scope of the alert.
 - 1) Time since the abduction.
 - 2) Available resources to operate a telephone bank.
 - 3) Possible destination of the missing child or suspect.

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- 4) Any other information gained during the initial investigation.
- d. Make the following notifications.
 - 1) Uniform and Investigative Subdivision deputy chiefs
 - 2) Police Information Officer
 - 3) Juvenile Bureau supervisor.
 - 4) Detective Bureau Desk.
- e. Determine which personnel will be assigned to the telephone bank. The Safety Communications Center Situation Room has four lines available to handle incoming calls.
5. Safety Communications police supervisor responsibilities
 - a. Notify all personnel assigned to Safety Communications of the AMBER Alert activation.
 - b. Fill out the AMBER Alert Urgent Fax forms located in the template files on all police department computers.
 - c. Notify the Summit County Sheriff's Office (SCSO) of the AMBER Alert.
 - d. Provide a copy of the AMBER Alert Urgent Fax forms to the SCSO.
 - e. Prepare the Situation Room and verify that the telephones and personnel are in place to handle the influx of AMBER Alert calls.
 - f. If available, assign a dispatcher to the Situation Room to assist the personnel handling the telephone bank.
 - g. Broadcast all AMBER Alerts over police and fire dispatch channels.
 - h. Provide a copy of the AMBER Alert Cancellation Fax form to the SCSO when appropriate.
6. LEADS personnel will enter the missing child through LEADS and NCIC using the AMBER Alert flag.

G. A CHILD IS MISSING PROGRAM

1. Criteria

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- a. The program may be used for missing children, elderly persons, and mentally/physically challenged individuals.
- b. The plan is not to be used for habitual missing persons unless there are unusual or possible criminal circumstances.
- c. The plan is not to be used as a substitute for filing a Missing Person Report.
- d. Since the plan uses the telephone to contact citizens, the preferred usage times are from 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M.

2. Officer's responsibilities

- a. Respond to the scene and determine if A Child Is Missing criteria is met.
- b. Contact a supervisor to authorize activation. Any supervisor can activate this program.
- c. Immediately contact Safety Communications so the information can be entered into LEADS.
- d. Note in the remarks section of the Missing Persons Report that A Child Is Missing plan has been activated.

3. Activating supervisor's responsibilities

- a. Notify on duty shift commanders.
- b. Notify the Safety Communications police supervisor of activation who will then notify all Safety Communications Center personnel.
- c. Verify that the missing person's information has been telephoned in prior to activation of the plan.
- d. Notify the Detective Bureau Desk.
- e. Call information into A Child Is Missing Program.
- f. If the missing person is not located prior to the end of the shift, notify the oncoming shift commander that the program has been activated.
- g. Call cancellation information into A Child Is Missing Program when applicable. They do not recall the community with the cancellation information. In the event that the supervisor activating the plan is no longer on duty, the responding supervisor on duty at the time of recovery will call in cancellation information.

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- h. Verify that the narrative of the report indicates that A Child Is Missing Program was activated.
- 4. Detective Bureau Desk responsibilities
 - a. Notify a Juvenile Bureau supervisor, if needed.
 - b. Contact the Police Information Officer.
- 5. Missing Persons Unit responsibilities
 - a. Send a Missing Persons detective to the scene, as needed.
 - b. Coordinate the on scene response with the activating supervisor.
 - c. Complete the Case Follow-Up Report and forward it to A Child Is Missing Program.
 - d. Complete the missing person investigation.
- 6. Safety Communications police supervisor responsibilities
 - a. Notify all Safety Communications personnel.
 - b. Ensure information is broadcast on all dispatch channels prior to activation.

By Order Of,



James D. Nice
Chief of Police

Date October 13, 2011